

Sure, we've all seen a traffic sign with bullet holes, or, a traffic sign where the legend has been defaced, or, a traffic sign that's leaning or bent, or, a traffic sign that's been knocked down. These are all incidents of vandalism, that may render the sign useless, and that costs the city thousands of dollars each year. These events happen because people don't realize the important role traffic signs serve in guiding, warning and regulating traffic. But, over time, a traffic sign just sitting there next to the road, in the sun, rain, snow, dust, heat and cold, can also be rendered useless.

Traffic signs are manufactured with special sign face materials that are made to reflect the headlights of an oncoming vehicle. A sign that has outlived its useful life no longer reflects vehicle headlights, meaning that a driver is not provided with the information on the sign. This may result in a motorist driving off the road because a curve warning sign was no longer reflective, not stopping at a stop sign because the sign was no longer reflective, or, speeding because of SPEED LIMIT sign was no longer reflective.

Traffic sign sheeting comes in three basic grades (qualities) developed over the last 50 years, having varying useful life expectancies.

Type of Sign Sheeting: Manufacturer Warrantee:

Average life Expectancy:

Engineer Grade (EG) none 7 years Developed in the 1940's.

High Intensity (HI) 10 years 10-12+ years Developed in the 1960's, HI provides over 350% better sign

reflectivity over EG, and is legible from a 30 degree angle.

Diamond Grade (DG) 7 years 7-10+ years Developed in the 1980's, DG provides over 1,000% better sign reflectivity over EG, and is legible from a 60 degree angle.

Currently, most signs in the City of Council Bluffs have either engineer grade or high intensity sheeting. Diamond grade is used for special, high visibility situations.

A worn out sign may look anywhere from slightly faded to washed out during the day. This same sign may not be visible at all at night due to the loss of its reflectivity. Such signs need to be replaced so that the needed driver message is given.

The City Traffic Maintenance Division personnel have an inventory of most of the traffic signs in the City. This inventory includes information on the date the sign face was installed, or, replaced. Once a year, we attempted to inspect the reflectivity level of all signs along the roadway. If they need replacement, this work is scheduled.

If you happen to see a sign that just doesn't look right during nighttime driving, please let us know by calling Traffic Maintenance at 328-4645 or send us an e-mail at the link below. We're available 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

We will then schedule a sign inspection and replace the sign if needed.